

Overland Trip to
California in 1850

By Abraham Given, Frankfort, Ind.

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FRANKFORT, INDIANA

In the year 1849 a man by the name of Dennison went to California and returned in the early winter of 1850. He had been successful in gold mining, having quite an amount of gold in large nuggets, this was exhibited in different crowds and soon raised quite an excitement and desire of many to go and seek their fortune in the far-off gold fields. All this occurred at Wooster, Ohio. Soon large numbers from the city and county concluded to go to this City of Gold. In the early Spring, on March 11th, 1850, from Wooster, Ohio, 265 persons, after marching around the city amid the booming of cannon and a band of music, thousands having come in from the surrounding country to take a last farewell of their sons and friends. In fact it was a memorable occasion, not soon forgotten. The writer was one of the above number.

A party of five of us banded together in one mess, Mr. Hugh Boyd, John Brown. H. B. Messmore, brother David E. Given and Abraham Given.

We had to go by the overland route, all berths by steamer had been engaged for three months ahead. We had a light wagon made at Wooster, harness for four mules and other necessary things. Our mess hired a team to haul our equipment to the Ohio River at Wellsville, Ohio. First night out we stayed at Massilon, Ohio, second night at Chambersburg, Ohio, next day arrived at Wellsville, there took steamboat for Cincinnati, deck passage. First night I remember I had to lie on the hard floor with a piece of scantling for a pillow. You can see we were getting down to business. Arriving at Cincinnati, O., we took passage for St. Louis on steamer Yorktown, nice large boat. At Cincinnati Brother David and I went up into the city to buy Brother David an overcoat; we got a blue one with long coarse hair, paid \$5.00 for it, got back to the boat just as they were ready to haul in the plank, came near being left. Steerage passage again (economy). Had to drink river water, it made me sick. Father was with us, he was going to Indianapolis, Ind., to see about his farm there, went as far as Madison, Ind. On the way down the river at some point a man came hurriedly on deck crying. He said his father was dead and he was trying to go to his funeral but had no money to pay his passage on boat, but he had a valu-

able silver watch that he would sell at seven dollars to get some money. Father had compassion on the poor fellow. Later on the poor fellow got off the boat at next landing. Father opened the watch, it had no inside works. Father's compassion went down several degrees in less than a minute, I think to zero, (freezing point.) At Madison Brother and I bid him a long farewell amid a flood of tears. We kept on our way, stopped at Cairo. A man there had a lot of dried venison hams that he said was good to take along on the trip across the plains. Many bought them, they turned out to be sheep hams. I did not purchase.

Arriving at St. Louis we had to change boats, took passage on Boat El Paso for St. Joseph, Missouri. At St. Louis we bought part of our outfit, cooking utensils, etc. Brother and I each bought an oilcloth coat, greasy yellow with large blue flowers inside. Not much like the present McIntosh or rubber coat. At St. Louis we were given good advice by a stranger to be careful where we stayed all night lest we be robbed. He told us if we would go home with him we would be safe. We did not go.

We secured passage on steamer for St. Joseph and went aboard at once but did not leave for a day or two.

The boat up the Missouri River was much crowded, had to lie on the cabin floor at night, all covered over with coats. This river is very dangerous to navigate, so many snags. One night the boat ran up against a snag, broke a large hole in the boat. The shock was great, every one thought the boat would go to the bottom of the river but they got it patched up and all was safe. Had a very rough set of passengers, mostly for California, was cold, raining, sleeting and snowing most of the time. Saw a deer swim across the river in front of the boat, head and horns out of water. Saw many wild geese and ducks along the river. It was sport for those that had rifles, shooting at the game in the water.

Nothing of special interest in going up the river, slow passage up stream. On March 27, 1850, arrived at St. Joseph, went to a boarding house, remained there to perfect our outfit for the trip. On March 30th, bought four mules, all unbroken, had quite a time breaking them. After this we bought two gray horses, matches, paid \$200.00 for the span.

April 6th we left St. Joseph all ready for our trip, green

mules in team, John Brown the driver. Out of town was quite a high hill, in going down on the other side of the hill the mules ran away, our wagon in passing one in front caught the hind wheel, upset it and broke an axle, our driver pulled team up a hill against a tree and stopped. Remained there all next day, got axle repaired and drove up the river eight miles to Duncan's Landing. On April 8th, ferried across the river in an old flat boat, I think fourteen teams of us, high bluffs on opposite side, had to put ten mules to each wagon to climb the bluff, all ready started on our journey, when about four miles out broke iron rod that goes through wagon hounds, had to go back to St. Joseph for repairs. All ready, started once more. All through April it was cold and rain and snow, very unpleasant and very windy, had tent, slept in tent each night. From day to day not much of interest, from day to day we traveled on. After a few weeks' travel we saw some buffalo, first lot seen. A man by the name of McClure got on a horse, rode up and shot one; he cut off the hind half, got the two quarters across the horse and brought it into camp. At night all had a feast. On we went from day to day, —some seven hundred miles from St. Joseph we came to Ft. Carney, there I bought one hundred pounds of flour from the government, paid \$8.00 in gold. A chained big dog came near getting me there. Our greatest trouble was to get across the large streams; made boats out of our wagon beds, some one who could swim would tie a rope around him; he would get out at far side, the other end of the rope tied to the wagon bed, then put our baggage in boat and pull over and back until all were over, then last we would get in and cross, pull the wagons through by ropes, swim the mules. On and on from day to day. Came to Ash Hollow, south of North Platt River; good grass and plenty of wood and water. We camped for the night. Before dark about two hundred Indians, men, women and children came there and camped near us. It was a sight! Ponies and large dogs all loaded with their goods. Came to kill buffalo, this being the great Buffalo Field, best grass in that country. Their leader was a Frenchman who had married a squaw. He demanded a money contribution from us, or, he said, the Indians would kill us that night. We held a council of war in our camp, told the French-

man we would not do it, that we were all well armed and would defend ourselves. We kept our pickets out all night, had our guns ready for action, but were not molested. Next day we moved on our way, traveling along the south side of the North Platt River. This was the great buffalo country. We traveled about thirty miles per day; at night we estimated that we had seen about ten thousand buffalo on our day's travel. One day one of our men was out along the bluffs and he got a large buffalo hull singled out from the rest; he shot it but not to injure it, it ran away ahead of our train. Some of our men took after it with guns. Brother David and I were riding a mule each; I rode away ahead until I came up with a man with a gun. He galloped ahead until he came near the animal. It stopped. The man took aim, on the mule, and shot. When the gun cracked the mule jumped; down came the man and away went the buffalo. The mule ran back to the teams. I caught it and rode up near the animal; all had now come up; it stood still, tired out, three men ready to shoot. I gave command to all shoot at once, one—two—three—BANG! and down sank the animal, dead. We cut out the tongue and best part of the hams and left the balance. And on from day to day, seeing antelope, elk, bear, etc.

One day three of us were ahead of the teams, about twenty feet to side of the road lay a mountain lion facing us, lying ready to spring. At first we thought to shoot at it but concluded if it would let us alone we would do likewise. It never moved; had we have wounded it, it could have killed all three of us.

Next place of importance was Ft. Larimy. Some of our party had some blacksmithing done there, some did some fishing, not much catch. I remember it was a very warm day; a good many soldiers were kept there. We saw one sitting on the ground with a box of matches leisurely lighting one at a time and watching them burn. We were told this was the way he spent his money when paid off.

On we went over the Black Hills, now where Deadwood is, South Dakota, passed the top peaks in the forenoon, covered with snow, the sun was shining on the peaks, a most beautiful sight. On, on, on, we traveled up the Rocky Mountains. Up, up, up, higher and higher from day to day until the summit was

reached, so gradual you did not know you were ascending until finally the waters commenced to run westward, the dividing line had been reached, then we commenced gradually descending, down, down, down, traveling on from day to day until we came to the way to go by Salt Lake City, to the Southwest, we took Sublets cut off to save some three hundred miles traveling. Here I saw the first boiling, spouting springs, in the center of a small pond there were several spouts. Puff, puff, puff, just like a distant steamboat. On we traveled until we came to the head waters of the Humbolt River, the low lands covered with alkali. At Massilon, Ohio, when starting we bought one pound of tataric acid to put in the water so it would not hurt us. Some stock died that drank of it. I think we traveled down near the river some two hundred miles. One evening we came to a Twenty Mile desert, no grass, no water (very warm), about twelve o'clock at night came to water, had no supper, made a little coffee and each drank a little of that, laid down and went to sleep. Heretofore I forgot to say that being short of provisions, it was necessary to get through as fast as possible. We cut up our wagon and harness, threw everything away to lighten travel. Kept our tent and clothing but had little provision left. One incident in crossing a stream: Mr. Boyd rode a mule and had all our provisions before him to keep dry; the mule swamped and went under, Boyd and the provisions also, but got out. Mother had sewed up a small sack of corn meal yeast for use in California. It got wet so that night we made corn cakes of it, it proved to be worse than a dose of salts. I rode over this stream on H. B. Messmore's shoulders, high and dry.

Another thing forgotten in rotation: In crossing Green River, it is pretty deep and wide, we raised our wagon bed to top of standards, tied it there with ropes; all got into the wagon; I rode the front mule to pick the way, another man rode ahead on horseback to see how deep the water was, to keep from getting into deep holes. One of the party's wagons upset, the bed and all in it was lost, went down the river, (no lives lost).

On down the Humbolt River until it spreads out over acres of bad land and sinks into the sand out of sight. Then commenced the desert. Before crossing we stopped in the afternoon,

rested our mules, took light lunch ourselves and started on the long and tiresome trip across the desert of sixty-five miles. Part of the way is solid rock, the first part, but the last fifteen miles is quick-sand. After the long and tiresome journey, when we struck the deep sand, that is what tries men's mettle. We started in about 4 o'clock p. m., got through by 12 o'clock next day, traveled all night and night of June 25th, 1850.

When we got through to Carson River, which is across the desert, I laid down on the sand under a high tree to rest, the sand was so hot and all around so hot and I so much exhausted, thought I could not stand it. Provisions very short but on we went, soon getting into Carson Valley, then there was plenty of good grass and good water. Many hot springs, hot and cold near together in many places.

One night our two horses were stolen, we thought by white men, had but four mules left. One evening we camped where there was not any grass, we turned the mules loose for the night. Next morning when the men went out to hunt the mules all came in with no trace of them; then another wider circle was made, all came in with no trace of them. Then more men went out, still a wider range taken—a trace in the sand as of tracks was discovered, it was followed for some ten miles, and found—as there was no grass they kept on in search of grass. There was rejoicing when found. The march taken up once more (about noon), onward west, our provisions getting lower and lower, we were on less than half rations. After about ten days more travel we came up to a Mormon camp, they were on their way to California, they were going with their families and stock. They in camp one evening had killed a beef. I bought about a hundred pounds of them, sat up all night on the side of the mountain and jerked the meat, that is, dried it over a slow fire so that it would keep, had no salt, out of everything to eat but this meat. It made me sick. Now this was at the foot hills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. On we traveled, all day. Next day we came to the foot of the highest peak of mountain, all covered with snow, before, or at foot of this mountain we had to cross a stream of water which was melted snow, very cold—we had to wade the stream. I had been walking fast and was hot. In go-

ing into the water I got chilled. Now we here started for the last ascent of high mountains, north side, all covered with snow, so hard that it carried both men and mules. Now this was on July 2nd, sun very warm and snow cold to our feet. If any trees on north side of mountains all were covered with snow, as we saw none. I being so hot climbing the mountain and feet wet and cold in the snow, I took severe pain in my stomach, thought I could not stand it, but had to go on as best I could all day. At night got to the top of the mountain, there camped for the night. Snow had melted away from under some of the large trees, made a fire (no supper). I laid down, went to sleep. Next morning I was better. On we went down the west side of the mountain; out of provisions. We met two men with pack mules, flour and side meat. I bought some flour and meat at one dollar per pound each. I was the only one that had any money. On we traveled all day; at night, pretty well down the mountain, camped between sundown and dark, fried some of the meat for supper and had slap-jacks from the flour. When the meat was frying the smell brought the wolves; from the howling there appeared to be a hundred or more; had to keep up big fire all night to keep wolves from us. Next day, being July 4th, arrived at Placerville, or, nickname, Hangtown, five men having been hung from one limb at different times (large oak tree). I learned by M. H. Carter the tree still stood a few years since.

Placerville is the county seat of Eldorado County, first mines reached by the overland route. Mines here were very rich, mostly worked out in 1849. Near here was the first discovery of gold, Sutters Fort; mines there were very rich, in fact, the Placer mines within a radius of ten miles were as rich as any mines in California. Here we did our first mining by work over in Cedar Hollow, what had been worked the previous winter. In three days I washed out \$100.00, in this was one nugget worth \$8.50, all coarse gold. We first put our gold in a small phial, having nothing else to put it in. A green-horn came along; he wanted to look at it. I gave him the bottle; he let it fall and broke the glass. We had to gather up the dirt and wash it over again—some was not got.

Below is cost of first tools bought:

July 6, To one pick	\$5.00
July 6, To 1 shovel	7.00
July 6, To 1 wooden bucket	3.00
July 6, To 1 tin wash pan	2.50
July 6, To 1 wash cradle	20.00
July 6, To cutting corners off shovel25
	\$37.75

This was our first mining outfit.

Our next mining was on the South Fork of the American River. This was a failure, water high from snow melting on the mountain. We left here, came back about five miles from Placerville, found a good rich ravine. In this we took out about \$800.00. When this was worked out, prospected many places with poor success but eventually found fair diggings on flat or low grounds; had to dig down about fifteen feet, use an old-fashioned windlass to bring up the dirt, for 12 feet down; no gold, only about three feet next to bottom rocks had paying dirt; this we brought out of the hole, threw on top on ground until all dirt was out, then washed it out. A good deal of water came into the hole; this we had to keep out, also had trouble about caving in on us, hole about 5 by 7 feet. Out of this was taken about \$500.00. Next to this we put down another one about 7 by 7 feet, conditions same as other one; remember always had to go to bed rock. In this about \$700.00. Put down another one near here. The bed rock pitched off slanting; got nothing. Had our camp near here by a small stream; slept in hammock while here. One day a man was to be hung at Hangtown, near here; many went to see it. Brother and I remained at our work. We never worked on Sunday—read our Bible. Many did work on Sunday or shot at marks, washed their clothes or played cards. I have no recollection of doing anything while gone that I would have been ashamed to do at home.

While at work, as I have stated before, Mr. George Kirkpatrick, a man of my acquaintance from home, came across the Plains after us. He was lying sick at the foot of the mountain at Johnson's ranch. He heard where I was at work, sent me word to come to see him. I did so, remained all night (he got well). Next morning I was to return to our camp. Mr. Johnson, of the

ranch, told me if I would not go back as I had come (ten miles) but go over the mountain and keep on the south side of the American River, it would be much nearer. I took his advice. I did not have any gun or any means of defense. As going down into a deep canyon, up sprang a large wolf about twenty feet in front of me; it faced me, head, bristles and tail up, kind of moving from side to side ready to jump. I stood still facing it, badly frightened, expecting it to attack me. Soon I heard leaves rattle ahead of me. I looked beyond the wolf and saw a lot of young cubs go up the canyon on the other side, making the leaves rattle. It was the young cubs the mother was defending. I can not tell to this day how the wolf and I separated. There were many wild animals all about me, as the Sierra Nevada Mountains have plenty of grizzly bear, black bear, mountain lion, wolves, wild cats, etc. Had I got lost or killed, no one would ever have known what happened to me, but God spared my life for some purpose.

The camp that we occupied here for months was in White Rock Canyon. Here we had a yoke of oxen stolen. Had thought of going to southern mines for the winter but oxen gone, we gave it up. In this camp also I was very sick for about one month. One night I thought I was dying, but God, in His wise providence, spared my life for some purpose. Here also I loaned my first money at 5 per cent. per month, or 60 per cent. per annum, to a Mr. Ben F. Assen, of Wooster, Ohio. He went into the grocery business at Hangtown, and failed. I got from him 2,000 pounds of flour at \$20.00 per hundred, \$400.00, the balance he paid me, \$100.00 and interest \$160.00 in gold dust. I think I was about the only one he did pay. You can see even then I was a fair collector. This Mr. Assen afterwards studied law, married my wife's cousin and is one of the prominent men of Wooster, Ohio.

In the fall of the year Brother David and I had arranged to go into the gardening business with a Mr. Culbertson from near Wooster, to go into it near Sacramento, but afterwards Mr. Culbertson concluded to return home to his family; this got us into the notion also. Our partner, Mr. Hugh Boyd, concluded to return home. After talking about it for some time we got in

the notion of starting for home. I had at that time thought of studying medicine upon my return, but sickness prevented it. Before leaving I shall give you some of the prices paid for provisions. We ran an account for some time for groceries, on other side I will copy some from an old pass book.

July 8, To sundries	\$ 2.85
July 10, To 1 bake oven (second hand)	6.00
July 10, To 20 lbs flour, 15c	3.00
July 10, To 1 lb onions	1.00
July 10, To 1 lb tea	1.25
July 10, To 3 lbs rice75
July 10, To 4 lbs meat, 35c	1.40
July 12, To 10 lbs flour	1.50
July 14, To 20 lbs flour, 16c	3.20
July 14, To 2½ lbs meat, 30c75
July 14, To 3 lbs potatoes, 25c75
July 14, To 5 lbs salmon, 30c	1.50
July 15, To 100 lbs flour	17.00
July 15, To ½ lb salaratus, \$1.0050
July 17, To 4 lbs rice, 20c80
July 17, To fish	1.75
July 17, To 1 qt. molasses87
July 17, To 4 lbs meat, 30c	1.20
July 19, To 1 jar pickles	3.25
July 25, To 1 fish, 8 lbs, 37½c	3.00
July 27, To 6 lbs corn meal	1.32
July 27, To 5 lbs rice, 25c	1.25
August 4, To 50 lbs flour, 20c	10.00
August 4, To 4½ lbs potatoes, 25c	1.12
August 4, To 7 lbs fish	2.45
August 4, To 2 lbs salt, 25c50
August 4, To 9 lbs salmon, 35c	3.15
August 4, To 8 lbs potatoes, 20c	1.60
August 4, To 4 lbs sugar, 35c	1.40
August 4, To 2 lbs onions, 75c	1.50
August 4, To 10 lbs rice, 25c	2.50
August 4, To 1 pint whiskey62
August 4, To 6 lbs crackers, 28c	1.68

October 3, To 800 lbs flour, \$17.00	136.00
October 3, To 4 lbs hacon, 37½c	1.50
October 3, To 47 lbs bacon, 28c	20.72
October 10, To 12 lbs onions, 75c	9.00
October 10, To 50 lbs rice, 26c	13.00
October 10, To 20 lbs beans, 38c	7.60
October 10, To 4 lbs tea, \$1.58	6.32
October 10, To 16½ lbs shoulder, 38c	6.31
October 10, To 75 lbs sugar, 28c	21.00
October 10, To 15 lbs salt	2.70
October 10, To 4 jars pickles	8.64
October 10, To 260½ lbs ham, 43c	10.33
October 10, To 1 lb butter	1.25

Above I have just given a small list of some articles and general prices of same. There were three of us in this mess, Hugh Boyd, David E. Given and Abraham Given, part of the above was laid as winter supplies, before concluding to return home.

I, A. Given, penned the above, Christmas, 1894, at the home of A. Given and wife. At Christmas dinner were George T. Dinwiddie and wife, John H. Coulter and wife, Fred S. Coulter and wife and Miss Mabel Coulter, Mary Given. Rev. Parry and wife, George T. Dinwiddie and wife remained to supper. The occasion was a very enjoyable one. Beautiful day, temperature about 30 at noon.

On leaving the mines for home we had our knapsacks on our backs and traveled two days to get to Sacramento, put up at a hotel, had to lie on the floor on a mattress. The rats were every place all over buildings. A rat at night hit Brother whilst asleep. On the fact, he waked up, the rat ran off. Next day took steam boat for San Francisco, fare had been ten dollars but a cut had been made, by another boat, we paid \$5.00 each. In going down the river we started in the evening, warm and raining, foggy, very dark, another boat coming up the river, we going down; in passing ran too close to each other, scraped the upper side decking off our boat; came near being a very serious accident. We were asleep when it occurred; all soon were up, thought we would go to the bottom of the river. After some delay, went on again, got to San Francisco next day; remained there some days.

Took passage for the Isthmus on an English sail vessel, steel hull, called The Antelope, painted black (Captain Dalrymple); 170 passengers on board.

While in San Francisco we were through the city, also in some of the gambling houses; they had the best of music; houses all open; no attempt to conceal. There was a continued chink of gold coin piled up around each table, thousands of dollars; all kinds of games. A Spanish lady had a dice table; she had no trouble to get men to take a hand. Tables all over the very large floor. This went on from day to day; you would be asked to take a hand: "It is your cut, sir", and hold out the deck of cards to you. I did not cut. We had board on the ship after taking passage, perhaps one week before leaving; had nothing to do but loaf. While in that city, one day some lots up on the bluff were sold at sheriff's sale for about \$800.00 each. I did not purchase. Ship lay in the harbor several days waiting for a favorable wind to get out through the Golden Gate. I saw the Captain take up his field glass and look toward the Gate. Soon he had the sailors hoist the anchor, all commenced to sing the sailor song—it was new to me. Soon we were off, December 19, 1850; had a pilot through the Gate. I remember the breakers ran high, pitching the ship in every shape; felt just a little shy, many got seasick. For the first seven days winds were favorable; all went well. Then we got into calms and drifted from day to day; first seven days had sailed about 200 miles, had expected to get to the Isthmus in 20 days, but were out seventy-two days, and 52 days on small allowance of both bread and water.

In leaving San Francisco for some time I kept a diary from which I will copy as I find it written. I kept it until I took sick, of which I will speak after.

Dec. 19, 1850. The Iron Sail Ship, Antelope, (English) set sail from the Bay of San Francisco for the Isthmus, 170 passengers on board; we passed through the Golden Gate by 4 o'clock p. m. Waves running high, brisk gale; the vessel was considerably tossed and many seasick. The 20th not mentioned on diary.

Dec. 21. A calm, cloudy day; no land in sight; waves running high.

Dec. 22. Cloudy; high wind and cold; vessel running $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour in southerly direction. Latitude 35—11.

Dec. 23. By 4 o'clock a. m. one of the sailors while assisting in drawing from the bottom of the vessel a hogshead of water, fell from the main stay to the bottom of the hull, getting his leg broken, also one of his ribs; had got the hogshead pretty well up when something gave way. As I write I think I can still hear the chug at the bottom of the vessel. The ship's doctor had to get the assistance of a French doctor from our department—the same doctor that afterwards saved my life.

Winds high; sailing $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour.

Dec. 24. Clear; sailing at rate of 7 miles per hour and in a southerly direction. Latitude 30 N. There was much confusion about the meals, breakfast at 8 a. m., dinner at 3 p. m.

Dec. 25. This being Christmas, had the fatted calf killed, the prodigal sons returning home, had pot-pie and fared sumptuously. Vessel had two little steers on board, one was killed. Some of the sailors were drunk. Day was beautiful, clear and pleasant. Latitude 28—30.

Had music, two claronets, one violin, one accordinian, one flute

Dec. 26. Clear and pleasant with side winds; sailing at rate of 6. Latitude 26—15.

Dec. 27. This being 7 days sailing, we are 1,200 miles from port. Clear and calm; sailing 4 miles per hour. Latitude 24—49 N. Watch being raffled off, tickets \$1.00 each, highest number thrown being 42; first mate got it.

Dec. 28. Clear and fine day, good winds; sailing 6 miles per hour. Latitude 22—47. Another beef killed, also another raffling for watch—value \$35.00; highest number thrown 38. One of the sailors lucky one.

Dec. 29. Calm and cloudy; sailing slowly; sea very calm; sailing $4-6\frac{1}{2}$ per hour. Latitude 21—10.

Dec. 30. Pleasant, calm and warm; flies on board; also killed the last fatted calf; sailing $4-5\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour. Latitude 19—45.

Dec. 31. This being the last day of the year 1850, there was considerable excitement on board. A passenger went up into the rigging of ship, desired to go to top mast, as is the custom

of the sailors, any passenger in the rigging, they will tie him in the rigging unless they pay a certain sum of money; this the man did. When the head steward went up the same sailor attempted to tie him; he resisted; both came near falling from the rigging; both came down on deck; both drew large knives and went at each other, but were quickly parted. This was hardly over until two of the sailors were in a hand-to-hand fight.

Debate in the evening in our compartment by the passengers. Question, "Is the fear of punishment a greater incentive to action than the hope of reward." After being ably discussed, was decided in favor of the affirmative. This being a very calm day, sailed slowly, 2—3 miles per hour; all day long were in sight of Sacora Island. Evening clear; I was standing on deck astern as it was getting dark; sea perfectly calm; I heard a rushing noise; could not imagine what caused the rushing noise; the first mate came rushing back; he said a whale was coming; the water was in a foam; it came straight for the ship, gave a loud snort, passed under it; spouted the water high. I had a full view. It passed on; mate thought it was going to strike the vessel.

Jan. 1, 1851. At 12 o'clock a. m. the ship's bell was rung 51 times to ring in the New Year. The night was calm and still, it was a solemn sound in the night; had no warning; many thought the vessel was on fire. It was a very warm day. Went in our shirt sleeves; flying fish were to be seen in great numbers; a flying fish is about the size of a swallow; they will rise out of the water in great numbers, fly a short distance and light in the water again, some lit on deck and we caught them. Forenoon very clear, afternoon cloudy; sailing 4—5. Latitude 17—48.

As I now copy this, this evening, January 1st, 1895, just forty-four years ago today.

Jan. 2. Cloudy and warm by 12. noon; there was a school of porpoises came around the vessel, hundreds of them. Latitude 16—28.

Jan. 3. Warm winds, contrary; frequent showers and distant lightning. Latitude 15—10; Longitude 107—10.

Jan. 4. Warm and cloudy. Latitude 15—16.

Jan. 5. Warm and calm, with gusty clouds. Latitude 14—16. Just as it was getting dark there was a large bird like a speckled

crane lighted on the top rigging of ship; soon one of the sailors went aloft and caught it, brought it down on deck; as the crowd was examining it the cook house caught on fire, which created quite an excitement, but was soon extinguished.

Jan. 6. Calm, sultry and warm. Did not sail 4 miles the whole day, but caught a shark. Had a long hook tied to strong line, bated with beef; line tied to hinder end of vessel and let trail in the water long distance back. It followed for hours before it made the bite. When caught the line was drawn upon deck; large vicious fellow. One of the sailors, quick as flash, plunged large knife into back of head or neck. Sharks have two rows of teeth in upper jaw. When mouth opens teeth fly up, when closing they close down. One day a young whale kept swimming around ship below water; as it was perfectly calm, could see it perfectly; several shot rifles at it but made no impression. Latitude 13—27.

Jan. 7. Passengers commencing to complain about fare, the steward had a hard time. Latitude 13—7; Longitude 104.

Jan. 8. Warm and rain; high winds; passed six boobies (large birds) all setting upon a log or piece of timber, all in a row, side by side. We gave three cheers and passed on. Latitude 12—40.

Jan. 9. This day the captain put in each cabin a written notice. "It is hereby positively ordered that the steward of this place see that the lights are put out every evening at 10 o'clock. No smoking blow decks. John Delrymple, Master."

Jan. 10. By 10 o'clock in the morning had a squall of wind, no damage. Latitude 11—18..

Jan. 11. Perfectly calm; drifting; have lost eight miles since yesterday.

Jan. 12. Calm, as usual, and losing space; while going 10 miles south we drift 40 miles west. Latitude 10—36 North; brisk gale but in varying directions. A land bird alighted upon the ship; appeared very tired.

Jan. 13. From this on to the 22nd nothing of interest to note. Calms from day to day; floating.

Jan. 22. The white cook struck the colored cook, but he struck back; had a fight; black came off victorious.

Jan. 23. Great confusion among the passengers in consequence of having been put on an allowance of both bread and water; there was a committee of two appointed from each cabin to examine all provisions on board and report to the passengers; this was carefully done. Latitude 4—37.

Jan. 24. Next in order was to elect two persons out of each cabin to see that provisions were dealt out and distributed fairly; also to see that the cook fairly to each cabin. This being done, the vinegar was brought on deck and distributed to each passenger, share falling to each was one pine. Latitude 4—40.

Jan. 25. This day was spent by me reading one of Grey's novels. Calm; sails flopping. Latitude 4—50.

Jan. 26. For several days nothin special; for the last 25 days so warm, had no covering nights; down in the cabin in our bunks it was fearfully hot; no ventilation; would walk deck until late in night.

Jan. 27. By this time things were getting desperate. The captain had the sailors draw up all the barrel pork on board to take down into his department—27 barrels all on board. Passengers waited until all was drawn up. Captain ordered sailors to put all down in his cabin. At this time the passengers raised up in meeting, took all the meat, defying captain and sailors, captain saying he would have all arrested as soon as he got to port. One of the passengers ran at the captain, threw his arm around him, had him on his hip in the act of throwing the captain overboard when the first mate caught hold of the captain and pulled him back. Passenger divided the meat equally between passengers and was all taken down in each department; all was confusion. It really looked as if all on board would starve. Ship lying in calm from day to day.

Jan. 31. By daylight a ship was sighted in the distance but soon disappeared. Perfect calm. Latitude 4—24.

Feb. 1. Clear, warm and sultry; perfectly calm. Not sailing 2 miles per hour. Latitude 5; Longitude 87.

Feb. 2. Beautiful, clear day; very warm. We passed Cocoa Island, which is very beautiful, small, not inhabited, rises high, all covered with green timber and thick underbrush and grass.

When opposite the island 6 of the passengers launched a small boat and rowed to the island, caught 2 wild hogs, got them into the boat and brought them to the vessel, which was long after dark. Years ago a ship captain had left some hogs on the island; they have increased. Island very steep. The same man that attempted to throw the captain overboard was the one that caught the hogs. He said the grass was very thick; the hogs were rooting; he stepped up, caught it; he and the hog rolled over and over each other, down the side of the hill; he held on, help came tied the hog, caught another then came back. Had pork the next day, a feast; hog was a regular razor-back, long snout, not fat.

Feb. 3. Cloudy, light wind, but favorable. Latitude not given. At this date I see written "sick."

This was the day I was taken sick; no diary kept after this date.

After taking sick I went to the ship's doctor, his home was in New Jersey, got his passage home for his services. I was taken with fever and bloody flux. The doctor gave me a bottle of castor oil; he said I could take it out of the bottle. This I did; drank it right out of the bottle. I was still around part of the time but got worse. Dr. gave me but little attention; he said I could not live. A man had died a few days before. Where I lay I could hear the ceremony on deck, then the splash in the ocean. I knew I would likely be the next. My bowels had turned blue, nearly gone. An old French doctor was on board; he was called; he said he would take the case. First gave me a vomit, then blistered by bowels all over, left it on for 24 hours, then it had not raised right. I was unconscious most of the time; took off blister and put on each morning something to eat in and keep a running sore. Each morning salt water was taken from the ocean and brought down into where I was lying, put into a tub of this water and my sore and raw flesh washed off each morning; kept in the water until the fever went down, then lifted back into my bunk, a very poor bed, then had nothing that I could eat. I was that weak could hardly talk. Gambling at first was kept up nightly, as was the custom of some. I could not sleep and nearly dead. A council amongst the bet-

ter men was held one day and all gambling forbidden after night. It was extremely hot. A man from Portugal made me a paper fan, also a sick stool; he was very kind to me. Also two men from Missouri by the name of McMullen were very kind to me; some one sat up with me for a long time. Ship stopped at Quibo Island to take water, had to anchor miles from land; was rocky; they would let down out of vessel several hogsheads into the ocean, tie them together with ropes, then take row boats and tow them to shore, take to a stream and fill them, roll them back into the ocean, tie them together and row back, hoist into the vessel. This took, I think, two days. Several passengers went ashore with rifles and shot some birds; got back to vessel after night. Oh, I remember it as if but yesterday! A man shot some kind of a carrion bird; he gave Brother half of it for me; it was put away until morning. I thought I would have something that I could eat for breakfast. A rat that night stole it; I never saw it. Passengers all very kind to me. It was about thirty days from time I took sick until we reached the Isthmus. Oh, it was so warm and I so weak! We drifted eight degrees south of the Equator. On we went from day to day, you can imagine how hot. Eventually we reached the Isthmus; paid the French doctor \$50.00. He remained on the Isthmus.

The ship cast anchor several miles from shore, rocky and shallow; could not take the risk farther. The natives came out in their little boats to take passengers ashore—the water around the vessel was fairly black with natives. I was the last one off the ship. The sailors took an old comfort I took from home, tied ropes to each end of it, put me over outside the ship, I sat on the comfort inside the ropes; they lowered me down into small boat. I laid in the bottom of boat on my back; when we came near shore a native waded into the water to boat, took hold of me to carry out. My bowels were still raw; he hurt me; I screamed out; he dropped me. Some of our own men carried me to the hotel. I can remember, the old houses were low and many covered with moss and green vines, peculiar looking city. I was taken to some kind of a hotel, I do not remember much about it. I know I was carried up stairs and put in some kind of a bed. Remained, I think, one day. I well remember many of the pas-

sengers desired to go through the town to see it and as many were robbed from day to day. Many left their gold in my bed, thousands of dollars; any one could have taken all there was, I could not have made any resistance, but was not molested. Arrangements were made with two natives to carry me across the Isthmus in a hammock next day, price \$50.00; hammock swung under a long pole; I laid underneath, one native in front of the other.

There is only a mule path across, no wagons used there, the Isthmus covered with tropical timber (green); could see monkeys on the trees and hear them chatter. I laid all day on my back with the tropical sun shining in my face. Oh, I well remember how tired and weak I was! One of my feet got down through the cords at the end of hammock; I had not strength to get it back; it dragged along, rubbing against the bank; I could not make the natives who were carrying me understand; they were nude except a small breech rag about them, bare head and bare feet, in fact bare all over except the breech rag. That suits the warm climate there. Had to pay \$50.00 in gold in advance.

First day across the Isthmus at night we camped in the woods. I was too exhausted from being carried all day in the sun. All lay and went to sleep, I with the balance, but so very weak, I was flighty, not able to stand up or walk; I crawled out of camp on hands and knees down into a thicket of underbrush, no one hearing me. Eventually I was missed and search made. I was found some distance away in a thicket and brought back in a dazed condition.

This was a dangerous place, a party of Californians, crossing about ten days before us, were robbed and killed. Our party were on the lookout. Some one before lying down had taken his hat off and there was a tree broken off about as high as a man's head; he put his hat on top of that; some one woke up in the night, thought it was a man standing there; supposed it was robbers in the darkness—it just looked like a man with a hat on—the alarm was given; all our party arose in arms ready for battle; supposed we were going to be attacked by a band of robbers, but as the supposed man did not move it was soon discovered that we were mistaken, greatly to our delight. Two

alarms that night, I being lost in the underbrush; I had gone some distance before being overtaken, even though flighty I can remember it. We did not have anything to make a light and it was pretty dark in a thick forest.

1851. March.

The following day we traveled as before, I in the hammock; at night we arrived at Gorgond, the head waters of the Shagress River, 67 miles from Shagress; remained at Gorgond all night, very small place. I remember I was left, as it were, outside all night; very hot; some kind of bamboo house, sides and roof of rushes or something of that kind. I was laid upon some kind of platform about four feet above the ground to be away from reach of snakes, as they are very plenty there. My quarters, as I remember, were like our wagon sheds here, some kind of sides of rushes and open front and rear. Good ventilation. I have no recollection of any one else being in this shed (just a little lonely). There is thick underbrush here, not cleared as in our country—this is why so many snakes there, and hot country.

Next morning arrangements were made with some natives (I think 8 of them) to carry us down the Shagress River in a very crude row boat, 27 of us in one boat. I was laid down in the bottom of the boat; had to take fresh water along in jugs to drink by the way, the ocean tide came up the river so far, spoiled the water for drinking. The river is very wide and deep, empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Shagress; has sharks in it. On the way down we ran the boat against a snag, broke a hole in boat; water came in freely (I got wet); ran the boat ashore for repairs. I was carried out and laid on the beach on the hot stones, about mid day, hot sun in my face, and I so weak could hardly live. When ready I was put back in boat; went all day; beautiful green foliage along the river banks (tropical). I remember about nine o'clock at night there was quite a thunder storm at some distance away; it did not reach us. We had no covering over our boat, a very crude affair. Got to Shagress about 12 o'clock at night. I well remember being carried from boat in the darkness to some kind of a hotel; it was full; we had to lie on the floor of office as thick as packed herring, and glad

to get even that. I do not remember anything about this city, saw but little of it.

Next day took passage on a steamer for New Orleans, crossed the Gulf of Mexico, no mere sail vessel for me. One thing on this vessel I well remember: Some one had a young monkey tied by a chain; Brother David got a biscuit and saturated it with whiskey and gave to the monkey; soon it was drunk and of all the tumbling and yelling that I ever heard a monkey do was done there; it was laughable; the owner tried to find the one that did it, but no one told him.

We made fast trip across the Gulf, the barometer was falling rapidly; the captain knew a terrible storm was approaching and he wished to get through the Gulf before the storm would reach us. We got safely to New Orleans before the storm came. I really do not remember much about the passage of interest between the Isthmus and New Orleans, but I well remember after arriving at the city and the passengers were all going off, two men were carrying me off; the health officer on shore cried out "Stop that man," they fearing I might have some contagious disease; I feared I might be sent to quarantine; they examined me and I was allowed to pass off, greatly to my delight. I was put into a carriage drawn by two nice gray horses, the same rig that carried the famous singer, Jenny Lind, the week previous. I was taken to a hotel, put in bed up stairs, remained there a day or two. Brother David and Mr. Hugh Boyd exchanged our gold dust for gold coin; bought new suits of clothing there; got beautifully cheated. This was about the tenth of March, 1851.

We took passage on river steamboat up the Mississippi River to Cincinnati, Ohio. I laid in my bunk all the way up, still very weak. Nothing of special interest to note. Arriving at Cincinnati took railroad train for Columbus, Ohio; arrived there about 10 p. m. Brother helped me off the train onto the platform. He said, "Stand here until I get a carriage to take us to a hotel"; he left hold of me; I had not strength to stand alone; I fell on the platform; hurt my hand badly; some one helped me up and into the carriage; was driven to a hotel. I was put in the reception parlor until Brother would register and be assigned rooms. It was cold; I sat in an arm chair in front of warm

coal grate fire; I was alone; I kind of raised up in chair to try to get closer to the fire, giving chair a little hitch forward; I was so weak I almost fell forward in the hot grate of burning coal. It really almost makes me shudder now when I think of it.

Were just building railroads then. I remember between Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio, while on the train, a looking-glass was in the fore end of the coach; I saw a man in the glass but for some time I could not tell who it was. I had not looked in a glass since leaving California and as I was so much reduced in flesh did not know my own face when I saw it.

Next day we got to Shelby, Ohio, remained there all night, following day came to Mansfield, Ohio, took dinner and got into a four-horse stage for Wooster, Ohio, 38 miles from home. You may well imagine my feelings when getting so near home. I was only able to ride to first station, 13 miles distant, Ashland; I there had to remain over night, first being helped up stairs, put to bed, and let Brother and Mr. Boyd go on home. Oh, so near home and still not able to continue on! I laid on bed that afternoon and next forenoon. I well remember the landlord's daughter came up to my room and talked to me all forenoon—a returned Californian at that time was something rare. I had to answer a great many questions; it was company for me; she was a very nice young girl.

About noon down stairs I heard a very familiar and welcome voice ask the landlord if there was a young man there by the name of Given; he replied, "Yes, he is up stairs." I knew father's voice; he came after me in an open buggy. After dinner we started home. It was pretty cool, I think April 1st. I was very tired; got home to Wooster, Ohio, my father's home. There was rejoicing at our return. I was confined to bed for some months, had a touch of scurvy and jaundice combined. Was not able to do anything that summer; taught school the following winter north of Wooster at the Wasson School House, \$18.00 per month.

In the Spring of 1852 I engaged to clerk for Robison & Co., of Wooster, for one hundred dollars for the year with board and washing. I made a first-class clerk. They wished to retain me longer but in the Spring of 1853 I went back to McCullocks Mills,

Pa., and bought a dry goods store and went into business for myself, and continued in business there until January, 1860. I was married on June 10, 1858, to Rebecca J. Smith, of Wooster, Ohio. I came to Frankfort, Indiana, in 1860, went in business on the West Side of the Public Square, in the old Kelly room, first door south of the First National Bank, (clothing and boots and shoes.) In 1867 I retired from the clothing business; went into the bank of Carter & Given; the First National Bank was organized July 22nd, 1871, with W. R. Carter, president; after his death in January, 1882, I was elected president. On account of ill health I resigned January 5th, 1885, and retired from the bank entirely in 1888.

A. GIVEN.

(Note—Mr. Given wrote this account of his trip to California at the request of his daughter, Mrs. Geo. T. Dinwiddie. Mr. Given died December 1st, 1895.)



